

Almost 58 years ago, on Christmas Eve Nick Cominos and his Company boarded the liberty ship, *Pierre L'enfant*, to join a large convoy to the Atlantic. Thirty-one days later Cominos' Company landed on the only one of the Dalmation Islands in Adriatic Sea not occupied by the Nazis, the Island of Vis.

From their base on the Island of Vis, Company C raided the Nazi occupied Island of Solta. Within two days, Company C and their allies had captured the island. This was not without a cost. Company C lost one man and six others were wounded, including Nick Cominos.

After recuperating and returning to Vis, in August of 1944, Mr. Cominos and his Company C were deployed to Greece where they parachuted behind enemy lines and conducted covert reconnaissance missions to disrupt the German occupation of Greece. The Nazis retreated from Greece in November of 1944, at which time the Greek/American Operational Group was disbanded.

The type of covert ground operations first used by Mr. Cominos and the men of Company C, 2671st Reconnaissance Battalion of the Office of Strategic Services are now being used to help fight the war against terrorism in Afghanistan.

Mr. Cominos and other World War II veterans have received numerous medals commemorating their service to this country during the war. However, because the records of the Office of Strategic Service were classified until 1988, the individual acts of bravery of Mr. Cominos and Company C have not been officially recognized.

Friday, December 7, 2001 is the 60th anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Many have drawn parallels between the terrorists attacks of September 11th and Pearl Harbor.

We have a living parallel. A WWII veteran and his Company who pioneered the types of special covert operations which are helping to bring closure to the tragic events of September 11.

In a time of national emergency, when we are once again engaged in military operations on foreign soil in an international effort to defend freedom, it is important to praise those who have served our country so courageously in the past and whose actions make them role models for our troops in Afghanistan and in future military efforts.

It is my honor to publicly recognize Mr. Nick Cominos for his acts of courage, heroism, and sacrifice in WWII.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO CADET PATRICK HUX

#### HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 6, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a solemn heart that I would like to take this opportunity and pay tribute to a young man whose life was taken during his service to protect others. Cadet Patrick Hux, of the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado passed away on November 25, 2001. As our nation mourns his loss, our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends during this difficult period of time.

On a snowy night, Patrick and fellow cadets witnessed a driver in distress when the driv-

er's car, due to icy conditions, sped out of control and crashed into an embankment. Despite dangerous road conditions, the cadets stopped to provide the driver with assistance. This noble gesture cost Patrick his life. While assisting the driver, Patrick warned his fellow cadets of the impending danger. His honorable actions left him in harm's way.

Patrick is not unlike like the many members of our armed forces. He wanted to serve his country and he chose the Air Force as a way to help protect America. Many service people have lost their lives in the defense of the citizens of this nation, on and off the battlefield. For Patrick, his battlefield that night was an icy, snow-covered road.

Mr. Speaker, during this time of national tragedy, Patrick symbolizes what our men and women in the armed services stand for. They fight for our protection, for our way of life, and our freedom. Patrick looked out for his fellow citizens that terrible night, and his actions saved the lives of others. I would like to express my condolences to Patrick's family, the Air Force Academy, his fellow cadets, and friends. He touched the lives of many and he will be greatly missed.

#### CONGRATULATING LA OPINIÓN NEWSPAPER

#### HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 6, 2001

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate one of the most influential Spanish Language newspapers in the United States on its 75th anniversary. Founded on September 16, 1926, La Opinión has played an important role in the development of the Hispanic community by reporting on issues relevant to the many Hispanic subgroups in the United States.

La Opinión's journalistic contributions to the Hispanic community are many. Sixty percent of my constituents are Hispanic, they range from newly arrived to fifth generation immigrants. As the leading Spanish language newspaper, my constituents depend on La Opinión for various types of information, including news from their home countries, national events and learning about America's way of life. La Opinión provides useful information for everyday life, creates awareness of local, national and international issues, and promotes political consciousness.

La Opinión has established itself as a leader in the information world. It has demonstrated its true commitment to inform and educate the community objectively. However, its success rests most importantly in the ability to present material in a human way and making every story applicable to the reader's life.

Once again, I congratulate and commend the staff of La Opinión for their commitment to inform the Latino community in the 31st District of California for the last 75 years.

#### AUSTIN-EAST AND MARYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

#### HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 6, 2001

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, every Member is proud when one of their hometown football teams has a winning season, but I am especially proud to say that two of my District's high school teams have won a Tennessee State Championship in their respective divisions. The Austin-East Roadrunners from Knoxville and the Maryville Rebels fought their way to victory on Saturday, December 1st.

For the Maryville Rebels, this was a remarkable repeat performance. As Running Back Carl Stewart said following the game, "It's tradition." In fact, this is the third time in four years that the Rebels have carried the title of State Champions. One of the keys to success that these players share is the belief that every game, no matter the odds, is winnable. They consistently remain focused on the next play and give it all they have.

For the Austin-East Roadrunners, this season was especially rewarding. Many of the Roadrunners had played together since they were seven-years-old, and Saturday's game offered the chance to end their season side-by-side as champions. As Austin-East Senior Mark Andrews said following the game, "Just tell Knoxville we've got a state championship \* \* \*". To Mark and his teammates I say, I believe your team's efforts deserve to be shared with Knoxville and with the entire House of Representatives. Congratulations.

Those of us who have played football at any level know that it requires a lot of hard work, sweat and even, from time to time, a few tears beginning in summer training to achieve a state championship in December. These high school students have shown us all what can be accomplished with the right focus and dedication to excellence.

I believe we can all learn a lesson from the fine young men on both teams. Head Coaches George Quarles of Maryville and Stanton Stevens of Austin-East, along with every player, coach, parent and fan, should be proud of these teams' efforts—I know I am.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO TONY BOBICKI

#### HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 6, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Tony Bobicki of Alamosa, Colorado. Tony has recently been named to carry the Olympic torch for the 2002 Winter Games. As a representative of the City of Alamosa, Tony will be among 11,500 Americans selected to carry the torch across the United States.

This is a great honor for many individuals in the country, but more so for Tony. Tony was selected for overcoming a condition that threatened to take away his ability to walk. Diagnosed with hip socket deterioration at the age of six, Tony was told the chance to walk